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SOVIET TIMBER INDUSTRY IN KAMCHATKA

M. A. Sergeyev

Forest Resources of Kamchatka

The forested area of Kamchatka has been estimated at 223,730 square kilometers, or 22,373,000 hectares. The main forested regions are the peninsula, the Anadyr region of Koryak National Okrug, the Penzhins region of Chukot National Okrug, and the Sea of Okhotsk coast.

Species of trees found in Kamchatka are white willow, poplar, alder, willow, bird cherry, aspen, birch, larch, and spruce.

The forested area of 169,800 hectares around the village of Kozyrevskiy, consisting of a 10 - 15 kilometer-wide belt along the Bolshaya and Malaya Nikolka rivers, was estimated in 1913 to include 76,900 hectares of larch with resources of 13,200,000 cubic meters of timber and 11,900 hectares of spruce with resources of 921,700 cubic meters of timber. The potential amount of timber that could be cut annually was estimated at 163,000 cubic meters. The average age of the larch and spruce trees there was then 142 and 158 years respectively.

In 1932, an expedition explored the region between the villages of Mil'kovo and Kamka and established that the 872,740-hectare area included 280,057 hectares of larch, 86,495 hectares of spruce, 466,042 hectares of birch, 6,418 hectares of aspen, and 33,728 hectares of alder, bird cherry, and other species. Resources of this area amounted to 88,614,000 cubic meters of timber, including 31,800,000 cubic meters of commercial timber. The maximum amount of timber that could be cut annually was estimated at 313,000 cubic meters. The expedition studied in detail 15 individual sections comprising 15,100 hectares and included them as a source of raw material for the Second Five-Year Plan.

- 1 -

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The timber standing in the valley of the Kamchatka River is diversified. In the river's upper reaches, there are two kinds of birch, giant alder, tall poplar, willow, and white willow. Aspen begins to appear near the mouth of the Adrianovka River (at the village of Verkhne-Kamchatsk). Coniferous taiga-type forest begins beyond Mil'kovo toward the Kirganika River. Spruce begins near the Kimitina River.

An enormous massif of larch grows along the middle course of the Kamchatka and its tributaries, the Shchapina, Tolbachika, Kozyrevskaya, and Yelovka rivers. Stretching out for 300 kilometers along the banks of the Kamchatka, the massif is 40 kilometers wide and covers an area of 25,000 square kilometers or 2,500,000 hectares. In the northern portion of the massif, between the Kozyrevskaya and Yelovka rivers, there are 2,000,000 hectares of spruce and larch; in the southern portion, between the villages of Mashura and Shchapino and along the Kimitina River, there are 548,000 hectares of timber, including 400,000 hectares of larch and 148,000 hectares of spruce. Spruce grows almost exclusively along the upper reaches of the Shchapina and Yelovka, although high-grade alder also grows in that area of the Shchapina. Giant aspen is found along the upper reaches of the Tolbachika. A minimum estimate of the resources of the middle valley of the Kamchatka, made in 1928, was 40 million boles of larch and 2 million boles of spruce.

Most important industrially are the areas around Yelovka, Nikol'sk on the Shchapina, and Mashura on the Shchapina.

The Petropavlovsk region is another important forested area of the peninsula. Magnificent trees are found in the basins of the Avacha, Paratunka, and Nachika rivers. Total resources there amount to 200,000 boles of birch and 136,000 boles of white willow and poplar.

The combined forested area of the Kamchatka and Avacha river valleys has been estimated at 4,652,730 hectares.

There are small stands of white willow, poplar, and birch in the Bol'sheretsk area.

The Anadyr region of Chukot National Okrug, comprising the valley of the Anadyr River from the mouth of its tributary, the Minkareka, almost up to the village of Markovo and the valley of the Anadyr's southern tributary, the Mayna, has a 12,000-hectare stand of larch. Although the trees are only of medium size, the area can provide 2,000 boles or 800 cubic meters of timber annually. The total forested area of the Anadyr region comprises 2,373,904 hectares.

The main timber stands in the Penzhino area are located in the valleys of the Penzhina, Aklan, Parena, and Gizhiga rivers.

The entire valley of the upper Penzhina is covered with forest up to the point where the Slovtunaya River enters the Penzhina, 40 kilometers below the village of Penzhino. The trees there are larch, poplar, and some fragrant poplar. Around Penzhino, there are islands of birch and larch. Larch is found below the mouth of the Aklan; the trees are 6 - 7 meters high with a butt-end diameter of 20 - 30 centimeters. There are few trees along the lower course of the Penzhina.

Exploitable poplar and aspen are found 10 - 12 kilometers above the mouth of the Aklan. Larch, poplar, and aspen grow in the valley of the Gizhiga River. There are no timber stands on the shores of Penzhinskiy Guba.

An early estimate of 4,537,500 hectares of forests for the Penzhino area is incorrect and grossly exaggerated.

- 2 -

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The forests along the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk have not been well explored. Only the Kava-Tauy and Chalomidzha river basins have been explored in the Ola area. The Semenov-Tyan'-Shan' expedition of 1930 estimated potential production of commercial timber there at 70,000 cubic meters annually, but conditions for floating it are unfavorable. The main species around Ola is larch. The butt-end diameter of the trees does not exceed 9 - 11 centimeters.

Timber Production in Kamchatka

From the very beginning after the sovietization of Kamchatka, the requirements in forest products have exceeded production. During the first years, production in Kamchatka was organized exclusively on the basis of the needs of the local population. In 1924 - 1925, these requirements amounted to 22,100 cubic meters of timber, including 7,640 cubic meters of commercial timber and 14,460 cubic meters of firewood.

The 3-year period 1931 - 1933 showed that requirements were 1,700,000 cubic meters greater than planned production:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Requirements</u> (cu m)	<u>Logging Plan</u> (cu m)	<u>Deficit</u> (cu m)
1930	-	37,000	-
1931	500,000	179,000	463,000
1932	625,000	540,000	446,000
1933	1,350,000	-	810,000

By type of operation, the 1929 and 1930 production plans were fulfilled as follows:

<u>Operation</u>	<u>1929</u>			<u>1930</u>		
	<u>Plan</u>	<u>Production</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Plan</u>	<u>Production</u>	<u>%</u>
	(cu m)	(cu m)		(cu m)	(cu m)	
Felling	30,000	12,800	42.6	37,000	30,500	82.4
Transport	30,000	9,700	42.3	37,000	28,300	76.4
Floating	30,000	4,200	14.0	37,000	8,800	23.7

In 1930, the Kamchatka timber industry was reorganized and a system of "lespromkhozes" (timber managements) set up. The timber managements included Bol'sheretsk and Tigil' on the western shore, Ayan and Shantarakiy on the Sea of Okhotsk, Yelovka and Klyuchevka in the valleys of the rivers of the same names (Kozyrevskiy region), Anadyr on the Anadyr River, and Avacha on the Avacha River. The following table shows how these timber managements performed during the first year of their operation in 1931 in regard to the plan for commercial timber and firewood (the total 1931 timber plan, including other types of forest products, was 179,000 cubic meters):

<u>Timber Managements</u>	<u>Logging Plan</u>		<u>Production</u>		<u>Ratio of Actual to Planned Production</u>	
	<u>Commercial Timber</u>	<u>Firewood</u>	<u>Commercial Timber</u>	<u>Firewood</u>	<u>Commercial Timber</u>	<u>Firewood</u>
	(cu m)	(cu m)	(cu m)	(cu m)	(%)	(%)
Avacha						
Felling	6,000	7,000	7,600	11,700	125.0	167.1
Transport	6,000	7,000	7,100	7,800	118.3	111.4
Floating	4,700	5,500	4,000	-	85.1	0.0

- 3 -

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Timber Managements	Logging Plan		Production		Ratio of Actual to Planned Production	
	Commercial Timber (cu m)	Firewood (cu m)	Commercial Timber (cu m)	Firewood (cu m)	Commercial Timber (%)	Firewood (%)
Bolsheretsk						
Felling	4,000	1,000	3,900	1,100	97.5	110.0
Transport	4,000	1,000	3,400	500	85.0	50.0
Floating	2,250	1,500	150	-	.6	0.0
Kozyrevskiy						
Felling	126,000	7,000	70,200	2,500	55.7	35.7
Transport	126,000	7,000	22,800	80	18.0	1.1
Floating	93,600	5,200	10,700	-	11.4	0.0
Tigil'						
Felling	5,000	-	9,400	600	188.0	-
Transport	5,000	-	5,900	600	118.0	-
Floating	3,750	-	1,100	-	29.3	-
Anadyr						
Felling	5,000	-	2,600	-	52.0	-
Transport	5,000	-	2,600	-	52.0	-
Floating	5,000	-	1,400	-	28.0	-
Okhotsk						
Felling	16,000	2,000	37,800	2,200	236.2	110.0
Transport	16,000	2,000	16,900	1,200	105.6	60.0
Floating	12,000	1,500	10,700	-	89.1	0.0
Total						
Felling	162,000	17,000	131,500	18,100	80.9	106.4
Transport	162,000	17,000	58,700	10,800	36.2	63.5
Floating	121,300	13,700	27,900	-	-	0.0

The 1932 commercial timber and firewood plan and production figures for six timber managements, Avacha, Kozyrevskiy, Tigil', Okhotsk, Ayan, and Shantarskiy, were as follows:

- 4 -

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<u>Operation</u>	<u>Logging Plan</u>		<u>Production</u>		<u>Ratio of Actual to Planned Production</u>	
	<u>Commercial Timber</u>	<u>Firewood</u>	<u>Commercial Timber</u>	<u>Firewood</u>	<u>Commercial Timber</u>	<u>Firewood</u>
	(cu m)		(cu m)		(%)	
Felling	100,000	29,000	80,200	24,300	89.2	83.7
Transport	150,000	29,000	85,200	5,800	56.8	20.0
Floating	121,300	-	52,600	1,000	43.3	-

In 1933, the Kamchatka timber industry was again reorganized; the outlying managements were deactivated and all logging was concentrated in three timber managements; the Kozyrevskiy and Yelovka managements cut commercial timber and the Avacha management cut firewood. The 1933 commercial timber plan was carried out as follows:

<u>Operation</u>	<u>Logging Plan</u>	<u>Production</u>	<u>Ratio of Actual to Planned Production</u>
	(cu m)	(cu m)	(%)
Felling	78,000	35,800	45.8
Transport	100,000	61,200	61.2
Floating	75,000	54,000	72.0

In 1930, a lumber combine was begun at Klyuch on the right bank of the Kamchatka River. Planned annual capacity of the combine was the processing of 120,000 cubic meters of saw logs into 280,500 barrels of various sizes and 800,000 - 1,000,000 cases for packing preserved fish. The combine began operations in 1933 with the sawing, lath and shingle, cooperage, wooden case, and drying shops in partial operation. The plant had its own electric-power plant. During the third quarter of 1933, the combine produced 11,950 cubic meters of lumber and other saw products.

Besides this combine, Kamchatka had at the time a single-frame sawmill at Petropavlovsk which produced 7,000 cubic meters of saw products annually.

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- 5 -

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